

I. Introduction. Ps. 81:11-13 95:1-11

II. Three sayings about listening to the Word. Are you listening? v. 16-18 Mark 4:21-25

A. Jesus' Word is like a lamp. v. 16

1. Lamps and lights are common metaphors in Scripture. 11:33-35 12:35 1:79 2:32 Mt. 5:15 6:22 John 1:4-5 5:35 8:12 9:5 11:9 Rev. 1:12-13 Ps. 119:105 2 Pe. 1:19
2. Lamps are only useful if they are openly displayed, not hidden.
3. Is Jesus talking primarily about our role as lights in the world? Mt. 5:15
4. It is more likely that Jesus' teaching is the Light. 8:18,21 1:79 2:32 John 8:12. The issue here is not our proclamation of the Word, but our reception of it.
5. Many people hear God's Word without it making any difference in their lives.
6. Some people, like the Scribes and Pharisees, are trying suppress Jesus' teaching.

B. The Word/light will expose your true nature. v. 17 12:1b-2 Mark 4:22

1. The light reveals whether one's profession of faith is real. John 3:19-21
2. Some people who appear to be authentic will be exposed as frauds – nothing will be hidden. Mt. 10:26 23:23 Ro. 2:16 1 Co. 4:5 Ecc. 11:9 12:14
3. It is not Jesus' Word (the light/seed) which fails, but the hearers.

C. Your response to the light determines your destiny. v. 18 19:11-26 Mt. 13:12 25:29

1. The crucial issue for your eternal soul is, how well do you listen to Jesus?
2. Those who embrace Jesus' message will receive more and more. 8:8,15 Pr. 9:9 John 17:6 1:16 15:5 Gal. 5:22-23
3. Those who reject Jesus' message will have their privileges taken away. Heb. 4:2 3:15 19:19-24 Mt. 21:33-44 Rom. 11:17 2:17-29 Acts 13:46 28:25-28 Isa. 6:9-10

D. Application – We need to utilize the light Jesus has given us; hear and obey. v. 8a

1. People's true nature is revealed by their response to Jesus' Word.
2. People's spiritual destiny is determined by how well they hear.
3. How well do you listen? Are you taking advantage of the opportunities the Lord gives you? 11:54 Mark 12:13 Ezek. 33:31-32 Isa. 40:21
4. How can you become a better listener? Acts 17:11 1 Th. 2:13
5. What response does the Lord seek from you today? 11:28 Js. 1:21-22 John 15:8
6. In this age Jesus sends us to display His light. 9:1ff Mt. 5:14-16 Rev. 1:12-13 Phil. 2:15 1 Th. 1:8 Eph. 5:11-13

III. Are you in Jesus family? v. 19-21 Mt. 12:46-50 Mark 3:31-35

A. Jesus' mother and brothers come to see Him. v. 19

1. Did Mary have other children? 2:7 John 2:12 7:5 Mt. 1:25 13:55 Mark 6:3
 - a. Celibacy is not required for special service to God. 5:38 1 Ti. 4:1-5 3:2,4 1 Co. 9:5 7:1-7
 - b. Jesus also had sisters. Mark 6:3 Mt. 13:55
2. Why did they come to see Jesus? Mark 3:21-22 John 7:5
 - a. Mark tells us that they feared that He was out of His mind.
 - b. Apparently they are coming to take Him home.
 - c. At this point Jesus' brothers do not yet believe in Him. John 7:5
 - d. Why does Mary go along with them? 1:38,46-55 2:19,48-51

B. They were unable to get to Jesus because of the crowd. v. 19b-20

- C. Jesus declares that those who hear and do God's Word are His family. v. 21
1. Is Jesus being disrespectful to His mother and brothers? Mt. 15:3-6 Jo. 19:26-27
 2. As important as one's earthly family is, hearing and doing His Word is more important. 8:15,18,21
 3. Jesus' mission of proclaiming the Word comes ahead of His family. 2:41-52 9:59-61 11:27-28 12:51-53 14:25-26 Jo. 2:3-4 17:4
 4. Jesus enjoys the closest relationship He has with those who receive His message.
 5. Jesus also declares that physical descent does not guarantee spiritual privilege. 3:7-9 Gal. 3:29,7 John 1:12-13 Rom. 2:29-30
 6. After the resurrection His brothers receive His Word and join Jesus' spiritual family. Acts 1:14 Gal. 1:19

IV. Concluding applications.

- A. Again we are reminded of the importance of listening well.
1. Those who have the most intimate relationship with Jesus hear and do His Word. 8:15,18,21 11:28 Js. 1:22 Mt. 7:24 John 8:31 14:15,21,23 Ps. 1 1 Pet. 2:2
 2. What difference is God's Word making in your life?
 - a. Do you feel distant from the Lord? Isa. 59:2 1 Pe. 3:7
 - b. You experience nearness to Jesus through hearing and doing His Word.
- B. How do you become a member of Jesus' family?
1. You don't get in because of who your earthly family is. 3:7-9 Gal. 3:29,7 John 1:12-13 Rom. 2:29-30
 2. You don't earn your way into Jesus' family by your works. Eph. 2:8-9 Ro. 3:20
 3. You are saved by faith alone— the most important thing to do is to believe His Word. John 6:29
 4. Those who have believed obey His Word and love to do His will. Js. 2:14ff 1 Jo. 2:3-4 Eph. 2:8-10 Mark 3:34
 5. We who hear and act upon Jesus' Word enjoy a greatly privileged familial relationship with Jesus. Rom. 8:14-17 Gal. 4:4-7 3:26,29 6:10 John 1:12-13 1 Jo. 3:1 Eph. 1:5 2 Co. 6:18 1 Ti. 3:15 Gal. 6:10 Eph 2:19 1 Pe. 2:10 4:4-5
- C. How should we deal with conflicts between our earthly families and God's kingdom?
1. We too must put God's kingdom ahead of our earthly families. 12:51-53 14:25-27 9:59-61 Acts 5:29 Mt. 10:37 1 Co. 7:39 9:5 2 Co. 6:14ff Deut. 7:3ff 1 Ki. 11:1ff
 2. Don't swing to the extreme of dishonoring your family. 1 Ti. 3:4-5 5:4 Mt. 15:1ff
- D. Those who have received Jesus' Word form a very special family/community with very deep ties. 1 Tim. 3:15 Gal. 6:10 1 Co. 10:16-17 Pr. 27:10c Eph. 4:1ff 5:1-2

Discussion questions

1. What does the lamp symbolize in verse 16?
2. When and how do the hidden things become evident? v. 17
3. What will be taken away and given? Why? v. 18
4. How can you work at becoming a better listener to God's Word?
5. Why did Jesus' mother and brothers come to Him?
6. Why didn't Jesus come out to meet them and go with them?
7. Is Jesus saying that His earthly family is unimportant? If not, what is His point?
8. What does verse 21 say about our relationship to Jesus?
9. When might you experience conflicts between the demands of your family and the demands of being Jesus' disciple?
10. What does verse 21 say about our relationship to each other?